

In Scotland the number of households is increasing

Over the last 20 years the number of households in Scotland increased by 313,000 (14%).

This is due to an increase in population and a trend towards smaller households.

Number of households



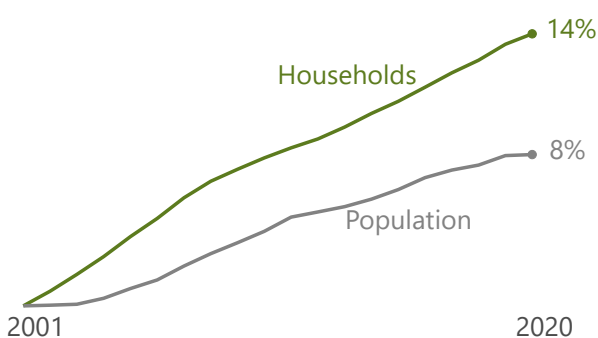
A household is defined as one person living alone or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address

The number of households has risen faster than population

This is because of changes in the way people are living.

The average number of people per household has fallen.

Percentage change since 2001

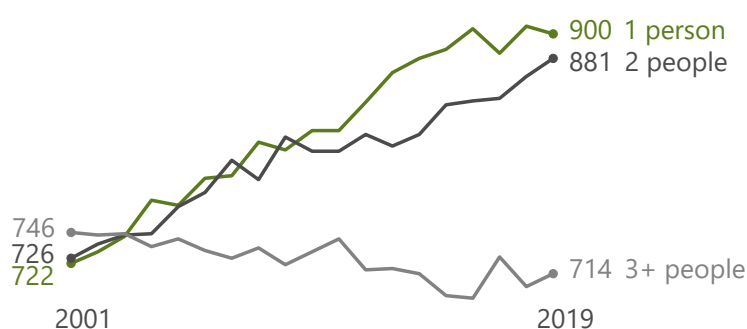


People are increasingly living alone or in smaller households

Around a third of households are just one person living alone.

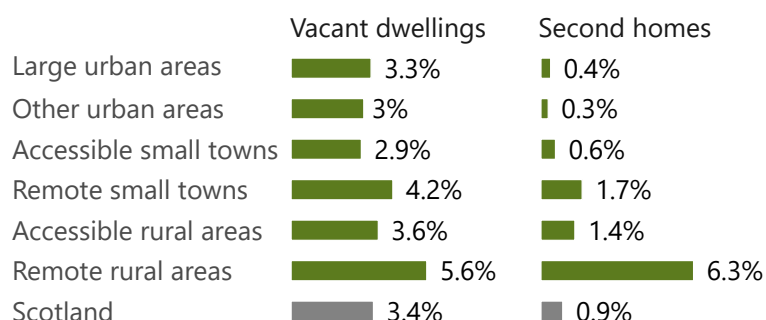
This is partly because Scotland's population is ageing, as older people are more likely to live alone or in smaller households.

Number of households (thousand)



Two or more people households could contain adults or both adults and children

Percentage of empty dwellings and second homes by Urban/Rural classification, 2020

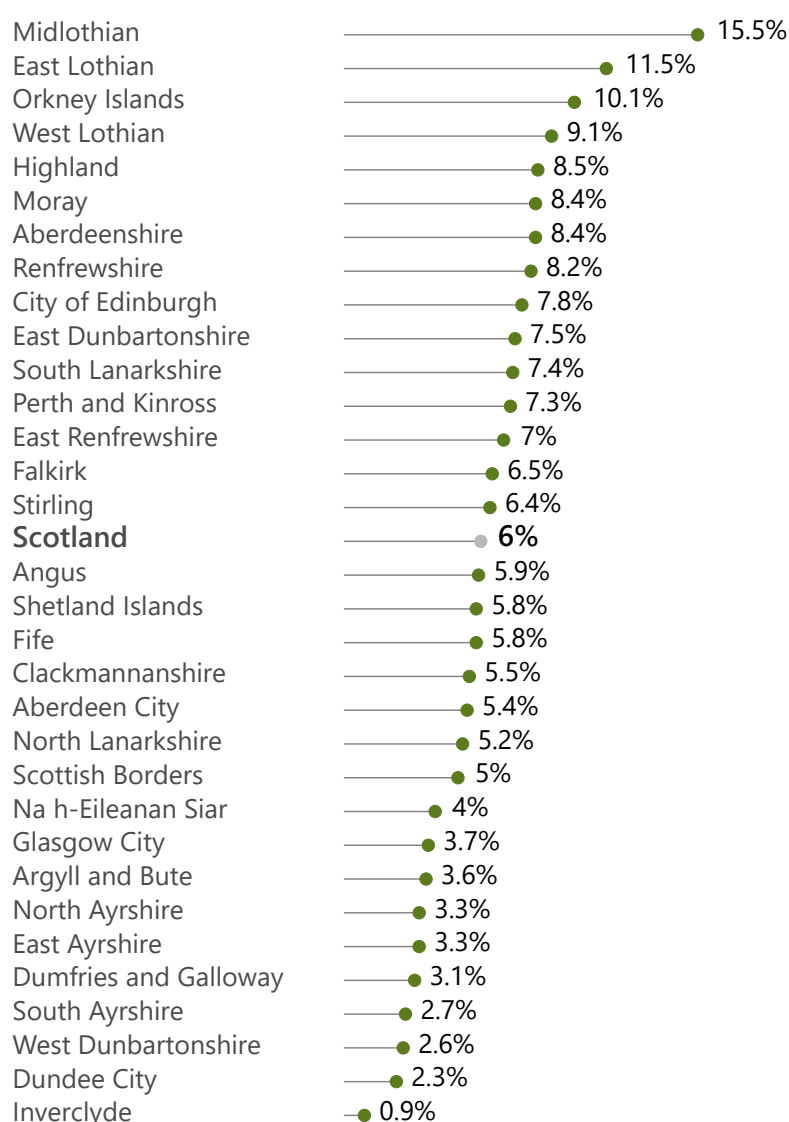


Ninety-six per cent of homes are occupied

There were 2.65 million dwellings in 2020.

Empty and second homes were not spread evenly across the country. Remote rural areas had the highest percentage of dwellings that were vacant or second homes.

Percentage increase in number of households: 2010 - 2020



Growth in household numbers varies across Scotland

The number of households in Scotland increased by 6% between 2010 and 2020. Each council area recorded an increase.

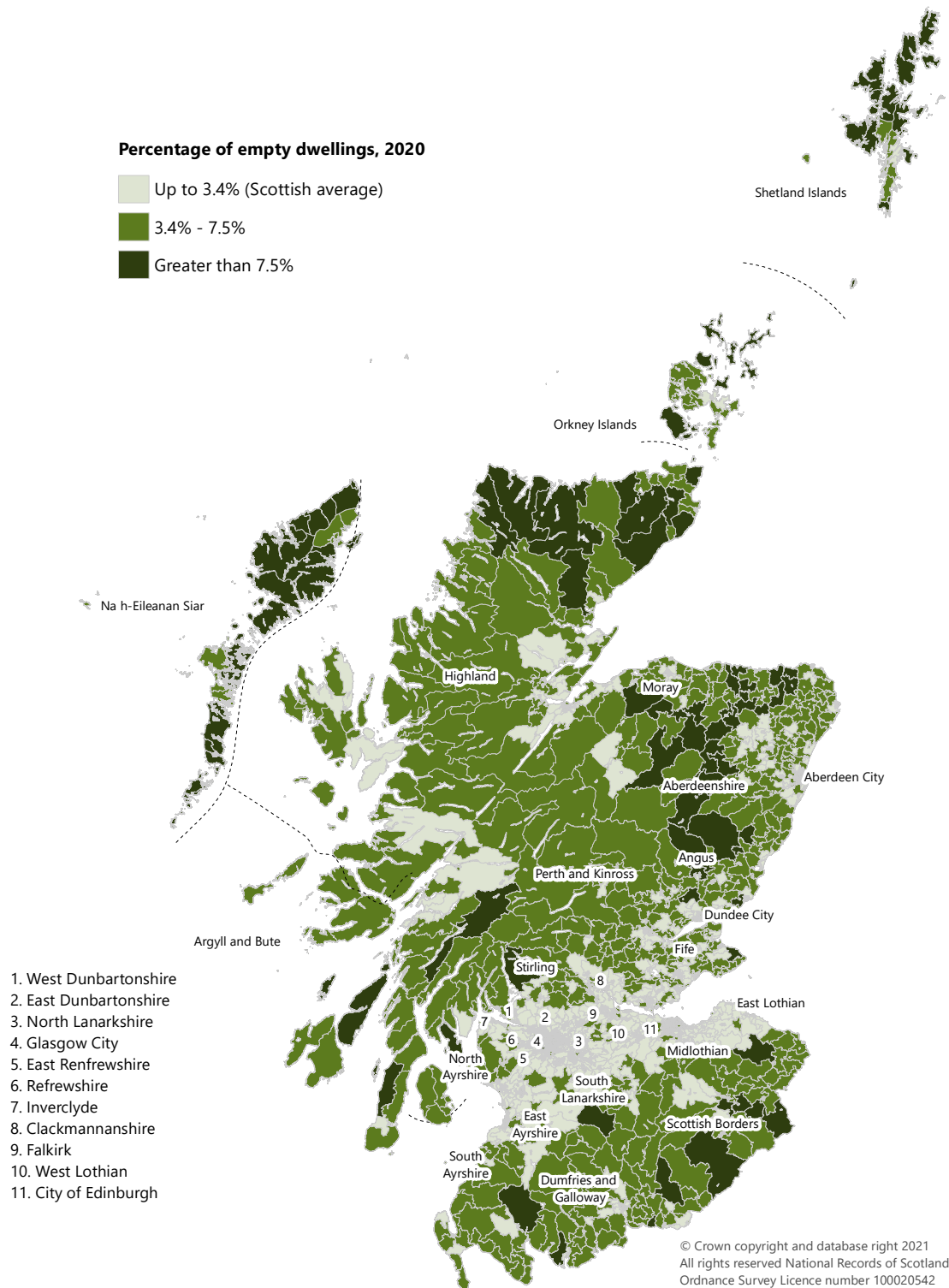
Midlothian, East Lothian and Orkney Islands had the biggest percentage increases in their household numbers since 2010.

Inverclyde, Dundee City and West Dunbartonshire had the smallest increases.

More illustrations of household trends in each council area are available in an [interactive visualisation](#). Information on population change over time by council areas is also available in an [interactive visualisation](#).

The level of vacant dwellings varies across Scotland

The highest proportions of dwellings that are vacant are found in rural areas. Within a council area the proportion of dwellings that are vacant may vary considerably.



The [small area dataset of household estimates](#) which accompany this publication can be used to help to understand changes in the number of households in a local area. This information is also available in an [interactive visualisation](#).